

European Patent Application

"Instant Messaging System"

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Abstract

10 The present invention relates to a system that enables the nearly real-time transmission of messages originated and received from/by heterogeneous communication networks. The purpose of instant messaging is to transmit high priority messages in (nearly) real-time between clients (man and machine). Unified messaging merges analog and digital transmitted messages such as facsimile, voice mail, e-mail, WWW and the cell phone

15 short message service (GSM/SMS) to unified instant messages. A Unified Instant Messaging System (UIMS) consists of four major components: distributed gateways, message brokers, message processors and a client directory database. Messages of arbitrary form can be translated into Unified Instant Messages (UIM) by Instant Message Gateways (IMGateways). Instant Message Brokers (IMBrokers) control the

20 message flow and further message processing. IMBrokers also ensure message authenticity and security. Further processing steps on an instant message can be performed anywhere in the IP network by Instant Message Processors (IMP) provided by Instant Message Service Providers (IMSP).

25 (Fig. 1)